

PARANORMAL UNDERGROUND®

Volume 13, Issue 12

December 2020

ADVENTURES IN CRYPTOZOLOGY

A Q&A WITH
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CASE FILES OF THE UNKNOWN

24 Haunted Sites
Ghostly Happenings at Bachelor's Grove Cemetery

26 Are We Alone?
'No Doubt About It' – Hot Chocolate and Their UFO Song

30 Cryptids & Mythological Creatures
Tusk Devil of Uruguay

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

12 Haunted Entertainment
13 of the Best Scary Shows of 2020

14 Investigator Spotlight
'Adventures in Cryptozoology' – A Q&A With Richard Freeman

22 Special Report
Help, My House Is Haunted ... Not So Fast!

PARANORMAL INSIGHTS

32 Personal Experiences: Paranormal Encounters
The Haunted Gypsy Wagon: A True Christmas Ghost Story

34 Personal Experiences: Ghost Hunter Case Files
The Haunting in Bubba's Bedroom

36 Metaphysics & Energy Healing
Get Your Happy On! A Simple Technique to Return You to Your Happy Place

38 Sage Goddess: Spiritual Tools & Teachings
5 Intentions to Set for 2021: A Year of Progress, Growth & Freedom

42 The Shaman Windwalker
Memories of Christmas Past

DEPARTMENTS

4 Contributors

6 Publisher's Letter

7 Coronavirus Resources

8 Paranormal News



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Willie has appeared on A&E's *Cursed: The Bell Witch* and CMT's *Most Shocking Ghosts*. He also hosted a public access show in Louisville, Kentucky, for 12 years, called *Spiritual Gifts and Wonders*. In addition, he created a group of sensitives, called Soul Warriors, who are based across the U.S.

ORRIN GREY

Orrin is a writer, editor, amateur film scholar, and monster expert who was born on the night before Halloween. His stories of ghosts, monsters, and sometimes the ghosts of monsters have appeared in dozens of anthologies, including *The Best Horror of the Year*, and been collected in *Never Bet the Devil & Other Warnings* and *Painted Monsters & Other Strange Beasts*, while his writing on horror cinema has been collected into *Monsters From the Vault*.



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A native of Chicago, Illinois, Rick has had an interest in anomalous phenomena since having a positive encounter with an apparition at an early age.



He is the deputy editor of *Mysterious Phenomenon* for *Spooky Isles* and is the author of *The Geek's Guide to the Strange and Unusual: Poltergeists, Ghosts & Demons and Behold! Shocking True Tales of Terror ... And Some Other Spooky Stuff*. Rick also appeared in *Ghost Tapes 2* and several episodes of *Ghost Tapes The Series* found on YouTube.com.

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Cheryl is co-creator and editor-in-chief of *Paranormal Underground* magazine, cohost of the *Intention Is Everything* podcast, and producer of *Paranormal Underground Radio*. She has more than 30 years of experience as a professional writer and editor and has written thousands of articles on topics ranging from advanced technology to paranormal phenomena.



Cheryl's previous magazine experience includes roles

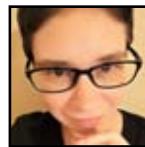
as senior and managing editor for several niche publications and online media.

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Morgan is a graduate from the University of North Carolina in Greensboro where she obtained a bachelor's degree in English. She loves to write and maintains a healthy fascination with all things paranormal thanks to experiences with the unexplained that she has experienced throughout her life.

Morgan knows a little bit about a lot of paranormal topics from research she has conducted. She pledges to keep you up to date about things that go bump in the night via *Paranormal Underground*'s monthly news column.



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Maria lives in a small town in Maryland and is the proud owner of a five-year-old Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, named Paris. Maria is an author, who first began writing four years ago. She published her first audiobook in 2018, called *Unearthly Spirits: True Stories of Ghost Encounters*, which describes Maria's life experiences with the paranormal. She is currently collaborating with a producer on developing a paranormal series and writing her first paranormal novella.



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Athena is the founder and CEO of SageGoddess.com, a source of sacred tools and metaphysical education. She earned a doctorate from the University of Southern California in educational leadership and has 15 years of experience as a professor, corporate trainer and consultant, and educator. Athena's metaphysical experience includes expertise in gemology, astrology, tarot, aromatherapy, Reiki, and herbal medicine.



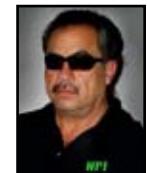
Through her writing, online courses, and material offerings, Athena helps others cultivate and maintain sacred

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Chad has investigated with East Tennessee Paranormal Research Society and counts Waverly Hills Sanatorium, the Villisca Axe Murder House, Bobby Mackey's Music World, the Queen Mary, Queen Anne Hotel, Hotel Alex Johnson, and private residences among his investigations.

paranormalunderground.net ♦

Have You Had a Paranormal Encounter You'd Like to Share?

If you've had a paranormal encounter and would like to share it with our readers, email us at paranormalunderground@live.com.

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PROOF OF THE PARANORMAL: Where Does Science Fit In?

Science can't provide answers to everything that happens in the world, at least for now. But through science, I believe we can come to an understanding of what is going on, especially when it comes to the paranormal.

Despite some scientists' best attempts to explain away paranormal activity, unusual events continue to happen. In fact, it is of little comfort to a UFO experiencer, who is just trying to understand what they saw and felt, to be told that it was only the planet Venus, swamp gas, or a weather balloon they spotted.

Even the U.S. government's attempt to explain away UFO phenomena, in the form of Project Blue Book, resulted in roughly 10% of cases being unexplainable. So, what do we do with those 10% of unexplained cases? Do we just chuck them into the garbage bin of history? Or do we chalk it up to the science of the time not being advanced enough to give a satisfactory explanation? Seeing as we live in a world defined by science, I think it is just a matter of time before science catches up.

The same goes for ghost and cryptid sightings. Just because we don't understand something or think it is possible doesn't make it disappear. People continue to have experiences and continue to look for answers. At the very least we need to take a hard look at what is going on

around us to see if we can figure out what is happening. It could be something as simple as a mistaken perception on the part of the experiencer, or it could be as complex as the Universe being far stranger than some of us are willing to admit.

In many cases, living in the comfort of what science does know and rejecting what it doesn't know makes people feel much safer. Perish the thought that aliens, ghosts, or Bigfoot could actually exist. The fear of not knowing what is out there is palpable. It is much easier to deny that such

things exist and live in a safe box defined by science. Down the other path lies the fear of not knowing what is out there. I liken it to the fear of the dark our ancestors had when first looking out from their primitive dwellings.

But through science, I believe that eventually the darkness surrounding the paranormal field will be vanquished. Then society as a whole will be free to embrace what it formally did not understand. Only by understanding something can we begin to accept it as a natural part of life.

But while we wait, we can examine the experiences of those who come face to face with the paranormal, as well as assess evidence collected by paranormal investigators. Until science catches up, paranormal experiencers will have to be the ones who shine a light on the unknown. ♦



Chad Wilson,
Publisher



Because most paranormal events have been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic (also known as the novel coronavirus), in place of our Calendar of Events this month, we are providing you with a list of coronavirus resources.

For information on the pandemic, you can visit the links below:

World Health Organization

www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

- How to Protect Yourself
- Country & Technical Guidance
- Your Questions Answered
- Travel Advice
- Situation Reports

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov

- How to Protect Yourself
- If You Think You Are Sick
- What You Need to Know
- Resources for the Community

Harvard Health Publishing: Harvard Medical School

www.health.harvard.edu/diseases-and-conditions/coronavirus-resource-center

- FAQs About Coronavirus and COVID-19

- Podcasts, including “How to Conquer Your Anxieties During the COVID-19 Outbreak”
- Questions and Answers

The White House/CDC/FEMA

www.coronavirus.gov

- How to Prepare and Protect Yourself
- What to Do if You Think You Are Sick
- What Are the Symptom?
- Who Is at Highest Risk?
- What Is Social Distancing?

U.S. Department of Labor

www.dol.gov/coronavirus

- Workplace Safety
- Wages, Hours, and Leave
- Unemployment Insurance
- Support for Dislocated Workers and States
- Job Corps Students
- And more work-related issues due to the coronavirus

National Institutes of Health

www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus

- Symptoms and Testing
- Prevent Getting Sick
- Daily Life and Coping
- If You Are Sick
- People Who Need Extra Precautions ◆

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PHANTOM KNOCKER, UFOS & A POSSESSED DOLL

BY MORGAN LINEBERRY

UFO FASTWALKER FLIES OVER SOUTHWEST GERMANY

A contributor for *Anomalien* brings us interesting UFO footage from a drone.

“The small craft, captured on August 8, 2020, comes into view of the drone camera at a distance of at least 1 kilometer from the drone flying the 1 kilometer in just 1 second, that makes 3,600 km/h, as fast as a bullet,” according to the witness.



This type of UFO is called a “fastwalker.” It doesn’t have any “wings, tail or visible propulsion, and moves and/or changes directions at high speed.”

NEW YORK UFO SIGHTINGS INCREASE IN 2020

Do we really need any more bad news this year? Oh well, here’s more (potentially) bad news. Patch.com writer Adam Nichols explains that we are at our highest risk of alien invasion right now.

“Skygazers have reported a huge increase of unidentified flying objects seen in [New York] ... 184 unexplained flying crafts or lights seen in the state have been logged



with the National UFO Reporting Center,” according to the article. Last year only 151 were reported, and this year isn’t over yet!

“We were on a rooftop viewing the Persiuds [sic] when the glowing green UFO passed directly overhead at a low altitude, followed by what sounded like a military aircraft,” said one witness. If that isn’t unnerving, I don’t know what is.

MALAYSIAN VILLAGES HEAR PHANTOM KNOCKER



According to Tim Binnall of *Coast to Coast AM*, something disturbing is happening in multiple Malaysian villages. People are experiencing loud sudden knocks, but when they look for the cause of the





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sounds, no one is there. To make it worse, one person said that after hearing a knock outside and seeing no one, "his bewilderment over the noise soon turned to terror when he heard the knocking coming from inside his house."

Multiple people have experienced similar things. "In nearly all of the instances, witnesses reported hearing the relentless sound of someone seeking entry into their residence, but there was no one outside when they looked out the window," according to the report.

Whether this is an orchestrated prank or something paranormal it is definitely unsettling. You can watch one person's experience with the unexplained knocking by [clicking here](#).

POSSESSED DOLL CRIES DURING BAR INVESTIGATION

What's creepier than a possessed doll? Not much. Paige Holland and Lydia Morris of the *Mirror* explain that "Paranormal investigator Matt Tillet," brings a reportedly possessed doll named Annie along on investigations.

"Annie is believed to have been possessed by a malevolent being, which Matt says helps bring forward spirits and activity on his investigations," according to the story. At a recent investigation at the Hideout bar in Wales, the doll began to cry, according to the investigators present.



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Matt is not sure what made the doll cry. "I've had her for over a year now and it's the first time she's had real tears," he told the *Mirror*.

I have never heard of using a doll for this purpose before, but honestly it sounds terrifying and dangerous.

TIK-TOK USER GETS SPOOKY SURPRISE DURING VIDEO

The *Mirror's* Milo Boyd brings us a video from Tik-Tok where a vlogger got a scare. The user is about to give a review when "something odd happens in the curtains behind her. The fabric pushes towards the camera twice before swaying in the wind. It then contorts and turns slightly."



You can clearly see the fear on the girl's face as she notices, and jumps up to investigate. Could it be the wind or something more sinister?

NEW LOCH NESS MONSTER SIGHTING REPORTED

On November 15, a mother and daughter were out for a walk when they saw "something strange in the water," according to Jocelyne LeBlanc of *Mysterious Universe*.

The monster was described as whitish/gray and extremely large. This was the 13th official sighting of the Loch Ness Monster in 2020. ◆

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I can't wait to connect!

13 OF THE BEST SCARY SHOWS OF 2020

BY ORRIN GREY, THE LINEUP

Has there ever been a year more perfectly suited to binge-watching than 2020? Whether you're chasing away the lockdown blues or just looking for an escape from the horror of the day-to-day, there are plenty of spine-chilling TV shows waiting for you to stream this year, from brand-new shows that made their 2020 debut to classic series that had particularly strong seasons.

If you're looking for something to keep you occupied and make you afraid to turn off the lights, these 13 goosebump-inducing series ought to do the trick, and with everything from spooky dramas to horror comedies, the 2020 horror TV landscape has something for everybody.

13. *The Stand*

No list of the biggest horror events on TV this year would be complete without a mention of this revisit to one of Stephen King's most ambitious books *The Stand*. The series brings an all-star cast and an altogether-too-timely tale of an apocalyptic super virus to CBS All Access.

12. *Supernatural*

The long-running CW series is almost old enough to vote at this point, and it has seen a lot of changes in its 15 years on the air. In 2020, the series finally drew to a close in a finale that left fans baffled and often outraged. But love it or hate it, *Supernatural* is a powerhouse on the horror TV scene, and nobody who is at all invested in the show missed that finale — or missed complaining about it on social media afterward.

11. *The Walking Dead: World Beyond*

Bringing a new perspective to the long-running franchise, this third installment in the *Walking Dead* series may have trouble distinguishing itself from a crowded TV zombie field, but it boasts strong central performances and some new ideas that the franchise — itself in danger of becoming a zombie at this point — sorely needs.



Locke & Key (Photo Credit: IDW Entertainment)

10. *Locke & Key*

Based on the comic books by Joe Hill — yes, Stephen King's son Joe Hill — the *Locke & Key* TV series may veer more toward portal fantasy than outright horror, but there's plenty of spooky fun (and occasionally weighty themes) to be had in this tale of a family who moves into a big, dark, weird house after the death of their father, only to find that the house is filled with keys that can make strange and sometimes sinister things come to pass.

9. *Penny Dreadful: City of Angels*

Trading in the Victorian trappings of the hit original series for 1938 Los Angeles, *City of Angels* also eschews the Gothic classics for Mexican folklore and a tale that's as much noir as it is horror. The combo works though, and the result is a sumptuous, twisty, and shocking show that's unlike its predecessor in ways that help it feel fresh and exciting, while still delivering that *Penny Dreadful* melodrama you crave.

8. Truth Seekers

Fans of *What We Do in the Shadows* who are looking for a new series to sink their teeth into should check out *Truth Seekers*, a new collaboration from Simon Pegg and Nick Frost (*Shaun of the Dead*). Sure, the series is jokey and tongue-in-cheek, as you might expect, but it's also surprisingly freaky, with genuinely eerie and unsettling moments that may just take you by surprise.

7. Dark

A German series that made a big splash stateside on Netflix when it premiered back in 2017, *Dark* wrapped up its run in 2020, with a finale as bewildering as viewers have probably come to expect and as dark as the show's title would suggest. The twists, turns, and narrative complexities of *Dark* have won it plenty of fans who tuned in to see how the story would be wrapped up — and what ominous threads would be left to dangle.

6. The Outsider

The last few years have been good for Stephen King adaptations, and the small screen is no exception. One of the best recent ones is *The Outsider*, an atmospheric slow burn from HBO that boasts an exceptional cast capable of pulling it out even when the plot meanders. Cynthia Erivo earned special acclaim as King's unlikely investigator Holly Gibney, where she absolutely steals the show.

5. What We Do in the Shadows

Spinning off from Taika Waititi and Jemaine Clement's hit 2014 horror/comedy mockumentary, if anything, the second season of the TV show version of *What We Do in the Shadows* might be the best thing the franchise has done yet. With iconic and lovable characters, non-stop humor, and plenty of heart, the 2020 season has currently got a whopping 100% rating on Rotten Tomatoes!

4. The Haunting of Bly Manor

Could *The Haunting of Bly Manor* have been the most anticipated TV horror event of 2020? It's very likely. This follow-up to Mike Flanagan's *Haunting of Hill House* series on Netflix applied that show's loose adherence to source material and inclination toward domestic melodrama — coupled with plenty of hair-raising frights — to the classic Henry James tale *The Turn of the Screw*. The results seem to have been a return-to-form for Flanagan, with the series enjoying an 87% at Rotten Tomatoes.

3. Ju-On: Origins

Ju-On/The Grudge may hold the record for the same story retold the most times, but there's still meat on these



The Outsider (Photo Credit: Aggregate Films)

bones, even after all these reboots and remakes, as this surprisingly atmospheric Japanese series, available on Netflix in the States, makes clear. Don't let the lackluster American remake that hit theaters earlier this year sour you — this is the real deal and reminds us of the power that led the original film to get rebooted so many times in the first place.

2. Monsterland

Adapted from the debut collection of acclaimed horror writer Nathan Ballingrud, *Monsterland* takes an anthology approach to its scares, telling a series of unconnected but thematically dense stories of people encountering the monstrous all over the country while asking hard questions about what it means to be a monster — or a person, for that matter. With mixed reviews, *Monsterland* is nevertheless a soulful showcase for a talented cast and hopefully a window for mainstream viewers into the work of one of horror fiction's rising stars.

1. Lovecraft Country

One of the biggest entertainment events of 2020 was the release of *Lovecraft Country*, which made its debut on HBO in August. Adapted from the novel of the same name by Matt Ruff, the series by showrunner Misha Green juxtaposes Lovecraft's weird monsters with the real-life horror of Jim Crow and features among its executive producers Jordan Peele and J.J. Abrams.

While the controversial series has polarized audiences, it's currently got a 90% at Rotten Tomatoes and should, if nothing else, help to scratch your monster-of-the-week itch while also saying something socially relevant at the same time. ♦

'ADVENTURES IN CRYPTOZOLOGY'

A Q&A With Richard Freeman

By Rick Hale, Spooky Isles

If you were to ask many in the paranormal field what the United Kingdom is known for, they would undoubtedly answer, "Ghosts and haunted places." However, what many may not know that apart from the occasional sighting of something strange swimming in a Highland Loch, the British Isles is home to many mysterious creatures.

Richard Freeman, author and cryptozoologist, is all too familiar with the shadowy creatures that stalk the nights and moors of the U.K. and Ireland. I recently spoke to Richard and learned that there is more than just ghosts in the U.K.

* * * * *

Q: What first sparked your interest in cryptozoology? Did you have a personal experience with an elusive beast?

Richard: I can answer the question of what sparked my interest in cryptozoology with three words, classic *Doctor Who*. I grew up in the 1970s when *Doctor Who* was at its peak with Jon Pertwee and Tom Baker. It was dark, Gothic, weird, and genuinely scary, unlike the pathetic, woke excrement that the BBC tries to pass off as *Doctor Who* these days. It was as much about horror as it was about science fiction.

There were giant, poison-seeping maggots crawling out of Welsh slag heaps; intelligent reptiles from the age of the dinosaurs now awoke and looking at humans as upstart vermin; Lovecraftian aliens that animated plastic, turning children's toys, shop dummies, plastic flowers, and even furniture into killers; sentient flesh-eating plants the size of Saint Paul's Cathedral; and giant rats gnawing



Richard Freeman is a full-time cryptozoologist who searches for and writes about unknown animals. The melodramatic may call him a monster hunter. Richard is the zoological director at the Centre for Fortean Zoology.

people's legs off down Victorian sewers! You never got this kind of visceral terror in shows like Star Trek.

Some of the monsters were based on supposedly real creatures like the Yeti and the Loch Ness Monster. This and a lifelong love of natural history shows like David Attenborough's *The World Around Us* and *Life on Earth* combined to make me fascinated with strange creatures and the concept of unknown animals.

Years later I became a zookeeper specializing in reptiles and later on a gravedigger (great Gothic credentials!). I studied zoology at Leeds University and was appalled by the schoolboy errors made by professors there. This soured me on academia very much.

Whilst hunting the Beast of Bodmin Moor in Cornwall I visited the now sadly defunct Potter's Museum of Curiosities at the Jamaica Inn. This was a bizarre collection of stuffed animals in weird poses (wedding, duels, schoolwork, playing cricket) and a heterogeneous accumulation of eccentric marginalia (head of a man-eating crocodile displayed next to a model of a church made out of bird feathers next to a Maori axe, for example). Here I picked up a little magazine called *Animals & Men* (which was not as rude as it sounded). This was the journal of an outfit called The Centre for Fortean Zoology (CFZ), a group that studied mystery animals and animal folklore. I subscribed and then began to write letters and articles for the magazine.

I visited Jon Downes, the director of the CFZ in Exeter, Devon, on a couple of occasions. Jon asked me to become the zoological director of the CFZ, so I moved down from Leeds and the rest is history.

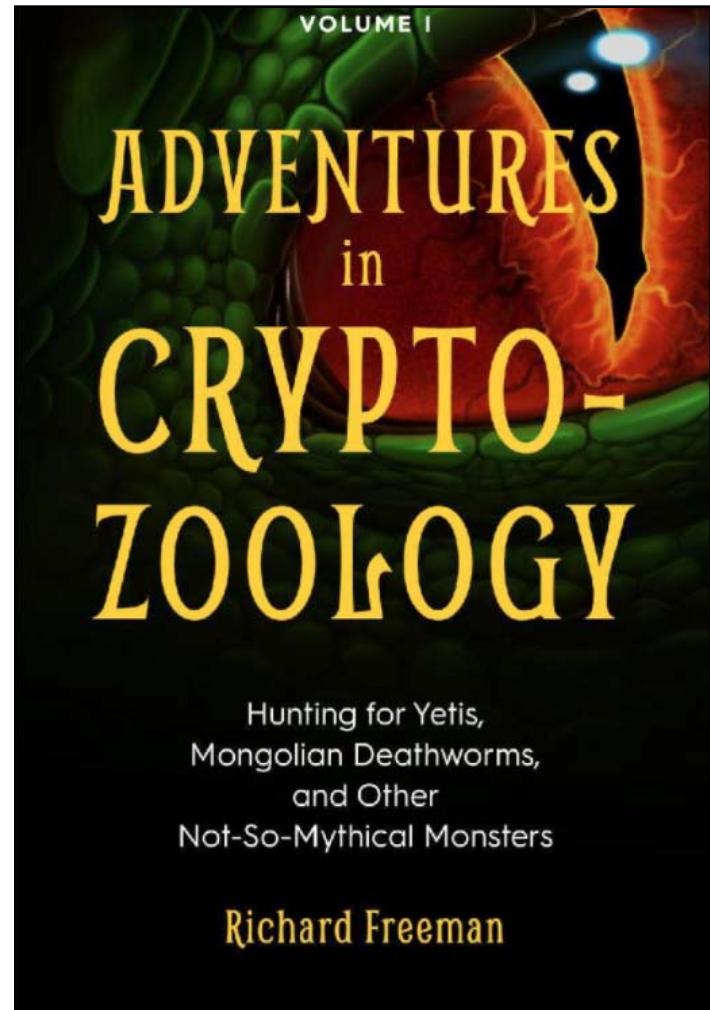
Since then I have hunted creatures like the Tasmanian wolf, the Orang Pendek, the giant anaconda, the Yeti, the Mongolian death worm, and the Almasty all across the globe.

Q: The United Kingdom is better known for its haunted locations. What are your thoughts on ghosts? And have you ever been on a paranormal investigation?

Richard: Ghosts are a separate area of Forteana from cryptozoology, but there are some gray areas where the two cross over, such as black dogs and phantom beasts, like the wonderful Gef the Talking Mongoose.

I think the term "ghost" is a catch-all term for many desecrate phenomena, most of which I suspect has little to do with the souls of dead people. I have visited supposedly haunted areas and used to drink in a famously haunted pub where I saw exactly zero "ghosts."

I have experienced minor poltergeist phenomena on two occasions and once saw what looked like the black



The book *Adventures in Cryptozoology: Hunting for Yetis, Mongolian Deathworms and Other Not-So-Mythical Monsters* is described as "the perfect resource for the explorer who loves Josh Gates's *Expedition Unknown* and *Cryptozoology A to Z*."

silhouette of what appeared to be a child of seven or so in a caravan in Devon.

Q: England is not well known for Bigfoot-type creatures, and yet there has been a handful of sightings. Are these cousins of the American Sasquatch? Or something else?

Richard: The chances of a Sasquatch-like creature living undetected in the UK is zero. Britain is a small country that has had more deforestation than any other country in Europe. A primate species would need a base population of around 500 individuals in order to be viable.

Think about it, 500-plus 7-to-8-foot hominins running around the British countryside and they have not been killed or captured? Most of what is left of our degraded countryside is farmland or unproductive monoculture plantations. This is not the forests of Tibet or Canada.

I think the reports of hulking, hairy man-like figures in the U.K. are something other than true flesh and blood cryptids and may be paranormal in nature.

Q: If Bigfoot is real, what could it be? Is it a complete unknown? Or could it be something that shows up in the fossil record?

Richard: There are a number of large, upright walking, unknown primates reported from around the world. The Yeti and Sasquatch are just the two best known. There is the Orang Pendek in Sumatra, the Almasty in Russia, and the Yeren in China, for example.

Fossil and DNA evidence is now mounting up to support their existence. In 2018, water from a pool in the mountain of Bhutan was sampled as part of an expedition hunting for the Yeti. It was tested for eDNA (environmental DNA, cells that are shed into the environment by the organisms that live there). The tests yielded eDNA from a primate that shared 99% of its genetic make-up with humans. That's more closely related to man than chimpanzees.

In other research, Professor Brian Sykes, a geneticist from Oxford University examined the mitochondrial DNA from the teeth taken from the skull of a man from the Caucasus Mountains. The man, who died in the 1950s, was said to be a hybrid of a human father and an Almasty mother. The Almasty is the Russian wildman, a sub-human hominin reported from the mountain ranges and forests of the former USSR. Sykes isolated DNA that he thinks is from an unknown species of hominin (a relative of the ancestors of man) that arose in West Africa and migrated out of that continent and into Russia, where its descendants still lurk to this day.

This may seem astounding, but it is backed up by other findings. New fossil hominins are being found all the time. Back in 2005, the 50,000-year-old remains of *Homo floresiensis* were discovered on the Indonesian island of Flores. At around three feet tall, it was at first thought to be a dwarf, island form of *Homo erectus*. A recent examination of the bones, however, showed that they were more closely related *Homo habilis*, a more primitive hominin that lived in Africa up to 1.9 million years ago and that, up till now, was not suspected to have a lineage outside of Africa.

More recently, two more species of hominin were uncovered at Red Deer Cave in China. Neither has been given a name yet, but both seem to be dependents of *Homo habilis*. These remains were much more recent, only 10,000 years ago, an eyeblink in evolutionary terms. More recently, still another *Homo habilis* descendant has been uncovered in the Philippines and has been named *Homo*



Richard has hunted for creatures across the world, including the Yeti, the Mongolian death worm, the giant anaconda, the Ninki Nanka, the Almasty, the Orang Pendek, the Naga, the Gul, and the Tasmanian wolf.

luzonensis. It seems to be related to *Homo floresiensis* and was about the same size and dates to the same age.

Other hominids were far larger. *Homo denisova*, or the Denisovans, were until recently known only from finger and toe bones found in a Siberian cave. The bones were so well preserved that a whole genome was taken from them. More recently, a massive jaw bone from the same species was identified, having been found in a cave in Tibet. It was far larger than a modern man.

We know that Neanderthal man, *Homo neanderthalensis*, interbred with modern man. Modern Eurasians have as much as 4% neanderthal DNA in their genome. Likewise, Denisovans mated with modern man, leaving 3-5% of the DNA in the populations of Melanesian and Australian Aborigines and 7% in the Papuans.

In other populations, there are genetic markers that suggest their ancestors interbred with other hominin species that are currently unknown from the fossil record and only known from their genetic material found in the



"There are a number of large, upright walking, unknown primates reported from around the world. The Yeti and Sasquatch are just the two best known. There is the Orang Pendek in Sumatra, the Almasty in Russia, and the Yeren in China."

genome of modern populations. Such markers are found in sub-Saharan Africa.

It is possible that some kind of archaic, large relic hominin, probably of an unknown species, is still alive in the world today. The Yeti, Sasquatch, and Yeren are very large; the Russian Almasty is smaller but still larger than a modern man. The Orang Pendek, however, seems more closely related to the orangutan. Hair we found in the jungles of western Sumatra was examined by Lars Thomas, an animal hair expert from Copenhagen University. He concluded that it was from a primate related to but distinct from the Sumatran orangutan.

Q: Nessie is arguably the U.K.'s most famous cryptid. Personally, I don't believe it's a dinosaur. What are your thoughts on Nessie?

Richard: Loch Ness is far from the only monster haunted lake. Hundreds of usually deep, cold-watered lakes around the world have such reports. Many of them are linked to the sea via rivers.

The chances of the Loch Ness Monster being a plesiosaur are nil. It would be more likely to be Elvis in a rubber monster suit! Plesiosaurs died out 65 million years ago. They were air breathers, so they would be seen breeching by anybody watching the loch for any length of time. They were also saltwater animals, not freshwater.

Most sightings can be explained in mundane terms. The loch is deep and steep-sided, so boat wakes can hit the shore and bounce back across the water remaining visible for half an hour after the vessel has left. There are temperature gradients in the loch that cause violent undercurrents that can drag debris against the prevailing wind. Also, seals have been known to enter the loch. In a lake with no monster traditions, such things would not cause a stir, but Loch Ness is arguably the most famous lake in the world and Nessie the most famous monster. Anything odd seen in the waters of Loch Ness morph into the monster in the mind of the witness.

However, there is a hard core of sightings that cannot be explained so easily. These, I think, refer to huge fish. Fish take their oxygen directly from the water and ergo are seen less as they stay close to the bottom. The beluga sturgeon can reach 23 feet 7 inches and is a possible candidate. The wels catfish can reach 16 feet long and were introduced from Eastern Europe into the U.K. by the Acclimatization Society in the 19th century.

Finally, we have the European eel. Eels live in freshwater, and when they are ready to breed they swim out to the Sargasso Sea where they breed and die. The young eels, or elvers, swim back to the same watercourses their forbears inhabited and the system goes around again. There is a theory that some eels never sexually develop



Richard has written books about cryptozoology, folklore, and monsters, including *Dragons: More Than a Myth?, Explore Dragons, The Great Yokai Encyclopaedia: An A to Z of Japanese Monsters*, and *Orang-Pendek: Sumatra's Forgotten Ape*.

and hence lack the impetus to enter saltwater to breed. These sterile eels are known as eunuch eels that stay in freshwater getting larger and older. Nobody knows just how big they get, but in 2004 a group of Canadian tourists claimed to have seen an eel in the shallows of Loch Ness that was 25 feet long.

In Ireland, such monsters are called "horse eels." Two killed by poison at a lake near Drewstone House, County Meath in 1907 measured 10 and 12 feet long.

Q: Mysterious black dogs are a staple of English, Scottish, and Irish folklore. They have been called "hounds of hell." Are they diabolical or something else?

Richard: Black dogs with burning red eyes, shaggy fur, and huge size are found in every county in the U.K. They have many names, such as Black Shuck, Padfoot, and The Barghest. These seem not to be flesh-and-blood creatures, but things of a paranormal nature. They are part of what I call the global monster template. In every culture, you will find the same kinds of monsters.

Dragons are the most ancient, powerful, and widespread of monster archetypes and occur in every culture. There are also stories of hairy, giant, man-like beasts; little people (goblins, pixies and so on); huge birds; monstrous dogs; and monstrous cats. I have likened these the crea-

tures that would have preyed upon or been in competition with our australopithecine ancestors on the plains of East Africa several million years ago.

When the australopithecines moved out of the forests and onto the grasslands to exploit new food sources, they met with some dangerous animals. They were preyed upon by crocodiles and pythons, as well as wild dogs, leopards, lions, and eagles. They would have been in competition with other primates, some larger and some smaller than they were. These ancient foes have analogues in the global monster template.

What I think is happening has to do with "fossil memories." These are subconscious fears and behavior handed down in our genetics through the generations. For example, black is associated with evil due to our ancient fear of the night when predators were roaming and humans were at a disadvantage. In houses that have more than one story, bedrooms are almost always upstairs because our ancestors in Africa slept in trees at night to avoid predators. I think some monster sightings are manifestations of these ancient fears from the gestalt subconscious of mankind.

The Tibetans believe that under intense, prolonged concentration, the human mind can create beings called "tulpas." Tulpas are viable to other humans and can take on a physical form. They can also take on their own will

and personality. Maybe many monster sightings are tulpas created by our collective fears.

Monsters seem to fall into two broad groups, the first being unknown animals, flesh-and-blood beasts. That is what my book [*Adventures in Cryptozoology*] is mainly about and what I am mainly interested in. The second group is what may be termed paranormal. They may be manifestations of our collective subconscious as noted above or creatures from some other dimension or plane of existence. Black dogs belong in this latter group.

Q: You have written several books over the years on cryptozoology. Your latest, *Adventures in Cryptozoology Volume I*, was released over the summer. What are some of the creatures you cover? And can we look forward to a Volume II?

Richard: *Adventures in Cryptozoology* is the first of a two-volume collection published by Mango. It is an introduction to the field of cryptozoology. I list the many creatures once thought to be nothing but folklore but later proved to be real creatures. These include the gorilla, the giant squid, the Komodo dragon, the okapi, and many more. Large animals are still being discovered today.

Then I go on to discuss the scientists that have been involved in the search for unknown animals from the 18th century to the modern-day.

The next chapters look at differing types of cryptids. There is a chapter on modern-day sightings of dragons. These include monstrous lizards, as well as flying beasts. One of the most impressive took place in Oconto Falls, Wisconsin. Multiple witnesses saw a classic, winged, western dragon, four legs, two bat-like wings. The creature spat blue and orange balls of fire. The dragon was larger than a plane and was covered in white scales.

We then move on to chapters about lake and sea monsters, respectively. One of the most dramatic comes from a large but fairly shallow body of water called Lake Chany in Siberia. People living around the lake say that a 30-foot, serpentine creature has killed and eaten 19 people in the last decade or so. The beast is said to ram and overturn boats then devour those who fall into the water. One woman saw this occur to her grandson whilst watching from the bank. Another man was fishing on the lake when the creature flipped their boat. He swam to shore but his friend was dragged down and eaten. The people have asked for an official government investigation, but none has been forthcoming.

"Monsters seem to fall into two broad groups, the first being unknown animals, flesh-and-blood beasts. The second group is what may be termed paranormal."

Out on the open ocean, there have been many astounding encounters. In the early years of the 20th century, many French naval vessels encountered sea serpents in Halong Bay, Vietnam. Admirals and captains saw the beasts as well as rank-and-file sailors. Some even fired on the creatures with no effect whatsoever. The 60-to-100-foot creatures were likened to Asian dragons by those who saw them.

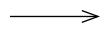
Another fascinating case was that of five teenagers from Pensacola, Florida, who went out to go skin diving on a WWII wreck. They were using a naval raft to paddle out to the area. However, a storm swamped the raft and left the boys clinging to a 20-foot metal frame on a buoy. Fog rolled in and then a huge serpentine head and neck rose out of the ocean, causing the boys to panic and jump into the water. Four of them were dragged to their deaths by the creature.

In the next chapter, I look at mysterious apes and relic hominids (relations of the ancestors of man). These include well-known creatures like the Yeti (which incidentally is not white, but brown or black) and Sasquatch and less well-known creatures like the Orang Pendek, the Almasty, and the Yeren. In one case, an 8-foot Almasty stalked and terrorized a group of youths on the Kola Peninsula in Russia. It hurled rocks and branches and pursued the frightened youths for several days. A park ranger who investigated saw the creature too.

Finally, we look at a mixed bag of creatures that don't neatly fit into any other category. These include legendary beasts like the unicorn, griffon, and basilisk and what may lie behind the stories. I also look at creatures such as the death-dealing Mongolian death worm that haunts the Gobi and the weird Tatzelwurm of the Alpine mountains. The Beast of Gevaudan, this was a monster that terrorized a region of southeastern France killing around 118 people between 1764 and 1767. It ran rings around hunters sent by King Louis XV and killed with impunity. The monster may have been a sub-adult male lion.

The book was going to be one volume but it was too long. The book was broken into two volumes. The second will be out soon.

Volume two covers giant creatures, known species that have reached vast sizes, such as giant crocodiles and snakes. It then looks at supposedly extinct animals that may still be around. These include the Thylacine or Tasmanian wolf, a dog-like, flesh-eating marsupial with stripped flanks. The creatures were supposedly hunted into extinction in the 1930s, but there have been over





A former zookeeper, Richard has worked with over 400 species, from spiders to elephants ... but he lists crocodiles as his favorite. He has lectured at the Natural History Museum in London and the Grant Museum of Zoology. He is also a regular contributor to the magazine *Fortean Times*.

4,000 sightings since then, some by zoologists and park rangers. Other creatures covered include the giant ground sloth, supposed living dinosaurs (actually probably something very different), and the continued existence of the Caspian tiger.

I also cover my own personal adventures in monster hunting expeditions all over the world. This includes searches for the Yeti, the Tasmanian wolf, the Orang Pendek, the giant anaconda, the Almasty, the Mongolian death worm, and the Gul.

Finally, I finish off with a chapter giving advice to the reader on how to set up a cryptozoological expedition of their own. I would like to encourage more people to do this. The more sensible people we have in the field, the more chance we have of proving the existence of cryptids.

Q: Why is mainstream science so skittish where cryptids are concerned? What if Bigfoot was the missing link or Nessie was a previously unknown or extinct seal?

Richard: I think scientists have failed to embrace cryptozoology through fear. It's fear of ridicule from their peers and fear of the creatures themselves. The idea that there may be real living monsters and creatures of which they have no knowledge fills them with raw terror. Every new idea in science faces opposition, and many times those who study these fields are thought of as heretics.

... Many scientists reject the idea of cryptids without ever even looking for them. The idea that anyone who has ever seen a monster anywhere in the world is a liar, deluded, or the victim of a hoax is simply untenable.

Q: Do you think mainstream science will ever come around to taking a serious look at cryptids?

Richard: A minority of scientists are now looking at cryptozoology in a more favorable light. After the discovery of *Homo floresiensis*, [paleontologist Henry Gee] said it was time for "cryptozoology to come in from the cold." Later, whilst talking in the subject of new species of fossil hominin, he said that he would not be surprised if one of them turned up alive in somewhere like Sumatra or Vietnam.

I think that it will take a type specimen of one of the cryptids to convince the skeptics.

The late Dr. Grover Krantz, who studied the Sasquatch, once said that even if you had a dead Sasquatch in your laboratory, you would have to drag [skeptics] to the lab and rub their faces in the corpse before they would take notice.

Q: Lastly, what advice would you give the novice cryptozoologist?

Richard: The final chapter of volume two of my book is entirely about setting up your own expedition. I won't spoil it all, but getting good native guides is the biggest key to success. Also, you could do a lot worse than joining up with the Centre for Fortean Zoology.

* * * * *

You can find *Adventures in Cryptozoology Volume 1*, by Richard Freeman, at Amazon.com.

[Click here](#) to find out more about The Centre for Fortean Zoology, a global resource center for cryptozoology and allied disciplines. Its aim is "to coordinate and promote research into cryptozoology; mystery animals; out-of-place animals; zoiform and zoomorphic phenomena, folkloric animal archetypes; and rare, unusual, and aberrant animal behavior. ♦



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BY THE LINEUP

HELP, MY HOUSE IS HAUNTED ... Not So FAST!

By Maria Maldonado

As an experienced paranormal investigator, I am always preparing for the next call for help because I never know what to expect during an investigation. And when that call comes and my anticipation increases, I attempt to stay focused on the present moment, trying not to get too excited.

One important lesson learned during my investigations is to remember that equipment used during an investigation can cause false readings. Here are a few things I've learned during investigations, as well as several reasons why a seemingly paranormal encounter may be caused by natural phenomena.

Electrical currents from storms can interfere with EMF and EVP. Any electronics are in danger of false readings during storms, excessive heat, and cold temperatures. Other electric appliances can interfere with ghost-hunting equipment as well, including a microwave.

A household electric fan can cause a person to see shadows out of the corner of their eyes if they sit too close due to the fan's vibration. If someone watches a television screen for an extended period and closes their eyes, once they open them, this can cause the appearance of "shadow people."

So what are some other possible causes of seeing alleged paranormal phenomena?

I recently had the pleasure of speaking with a gentleman who was experiencing what he thought was an apparition while recovering in the hospital. I had him describe to me to his best recollection of what was going on and when he saw these spirits. He replied with, "I had taken my pain meds. The pain was so bad I could hardly talk."

The next time I spoke with him, I asked him to take note of when he took his meds and tell me if he experienced any unusual visions. After about two weeks, we concluded that the pain and the pain meds were causing

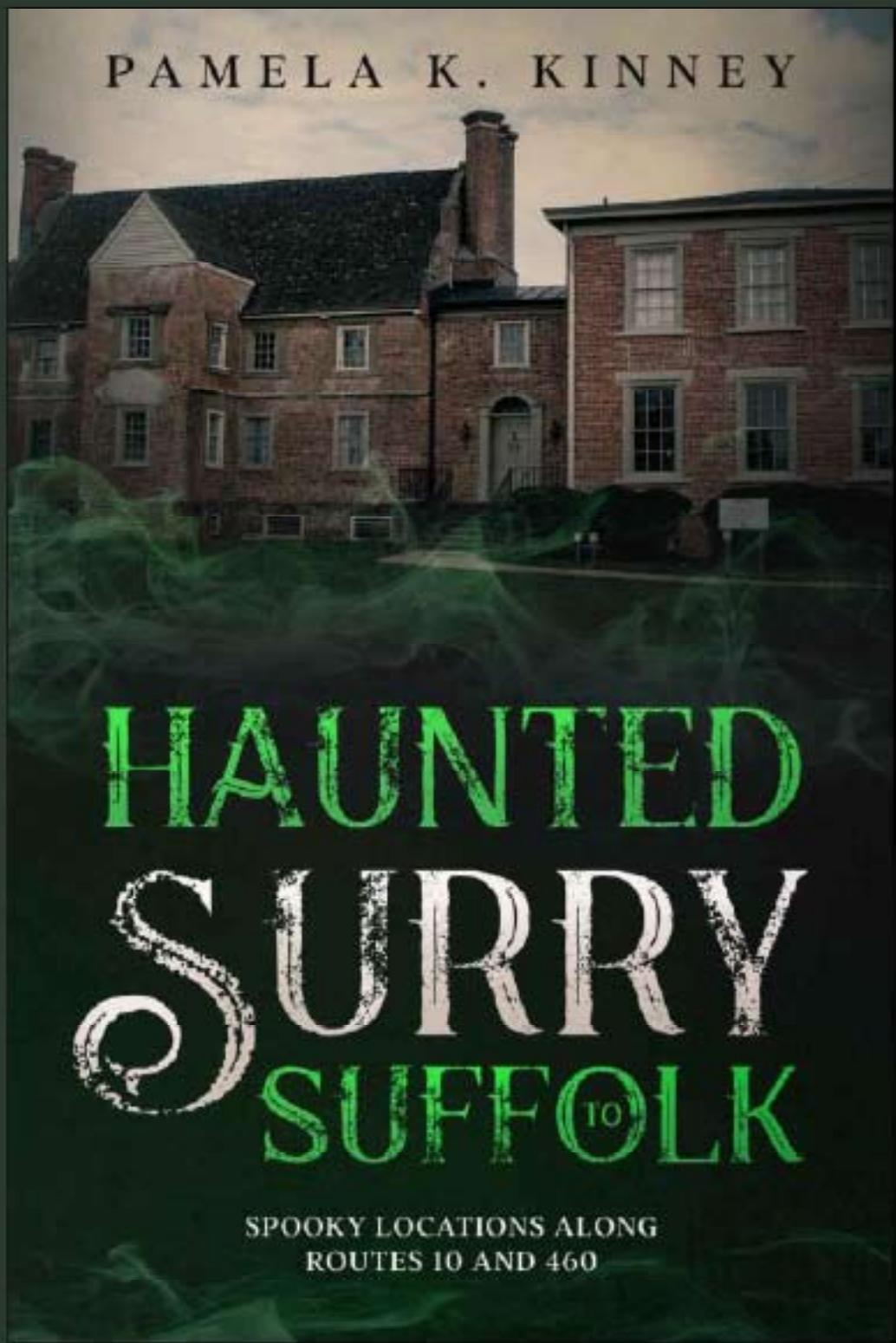


hallucinations. He spoke with his physician, who confirmed this and lowered the dosage of his meds.

So, the bottom line is that everything we encounter isn't going to be a part of the supernatural/paranormal realm. It takes time and an open mind to come to a credible conclusion. No one is perfect. But people contact paranormal investigators because they depend on our ability to solve the issues that are difficult to understand. Sometimes it's a hit, but most times it's going to be a miss.

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GHOSTLY HAPPENINGS

at Bachelor's Grove Cemetery

By Cheryl Lynn Carter

Amidst the daily hustle and bustle of the big city is a place where some pay no mind to the ticking of the clock. Day softly fades to black with nary a sound in the quiet alcove that time has forgotten. Near the Rubio Woods Forest Preserve in Midlothian, Illinois, along a section of the former Midlothian Turnpike that once was an old Native trail lies Bachelor's Grove Cemetery, one of the oldest pioneer cemeteries in Cook County.

After the Black Hawk War, when the area became settlements for English, Scottish, and German immigrants, a 1-acre plot of land was designated to be a cemetery for the families. Among those interred in the cemetery are pioneers, founding fathers, and former builders of the 96-mile Illinois-Michigan Canal, which linked the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River. The grounds were once a tranquil sanctuary where families would come visit the graves of their loved ones. They would spend Sunday afternoon picnicking under the shade of the trees or fish and swim in the small nearby lagoon.

Climbing over the rusty cable stretching across the entrance, one finds a fortress of tall trees surrounding the now crumbling asphalt path of the old turnpike. Rennants of old foundations and tiny fragments of dinnerware are all that remains of the once thriving settlement. Perhaps you will hear the sound of footsteps on the gravel behind you and the feeling of being watched. However, when you turn around, you will find yourself all alone. Or are you?

About a hundred yards down the path, a tall chain

link fence keeping vigil over its many souls emerges from the clearing. The gates of the cemetery are propped open. Are they welcoming visitors with open arms or tempting them to enter this forsaken place? Whatever the reason, there will be no turning back because she already has you mesmerized. Why is that? At first glance, this might appear to be a peaceful place. However, one might not realize that Bachelor's Grove is the most haunted cemetery in Illinois and considered one of the most haunted in America.

Although the area was once a place of promise, it soon became a place of discord. In 1834, German immigrant workers who were killed while working on the canal were the first laid to rest here. During the development of the forest preserve, the government began to purchase the land from the settlers. Those who refused to sell lost their land via eminent domain when the government had it condemned and seized.

It was said that in the 1920s, a mobster named Al Capone would use the lagoon as a dumping ground for his victims. Searches recovered 12 bodies and several firearms possibly linked to the war over liquor traffic during Prohibition. During the 1960s, the cemetery was vandalized several times, with trespassers unearthing wooden coffins, desecrating remains, and destroying or stealing gravestones. Although there are 80 plots, only 20 markers or bases remain. No wonder the spirits are not at rest!

There is a great deal of high strangeness surrounding the Grove, several of which I have witnessed myself. Near



Judy Huff-Felz took this picture on August 10, 1991. After the film was developed, she discovered that one particular frame contained the image of an almost-transparent woman sitting on the base of a gravestone.



Bachelor's Grove Cemetery in Cook County, Illinois, is home to spooky paranormal phenomena. (Photo: Cheryl Lynn Carter)

one of the graves you can smell the distinct scent of lilacs where none are present. There are sightings of a man with a lantern in the woods; a man with whom I have had several conversations. Is he still watching over the cemetery?

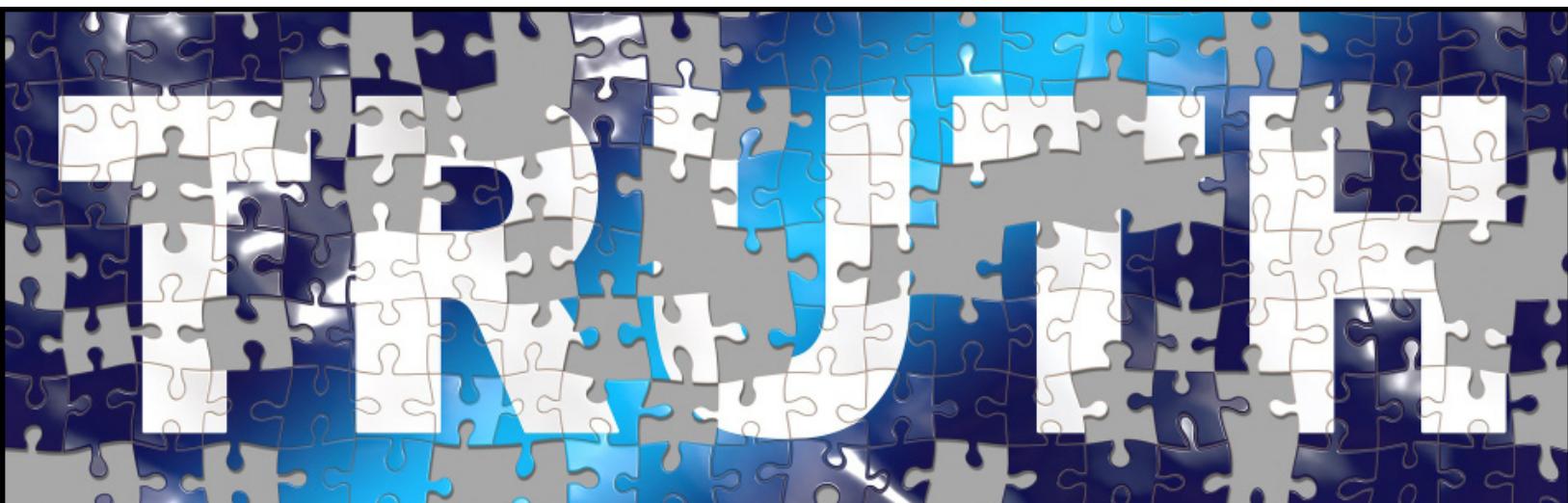
Down the path near the stream, there is a phantom white farmhouse, with white columns, a porch swing that sways gently, and dimly burning lantern in the window. Upon seeing it, you get a feeling that the house is leading or beckoning you somewhere. As you get closer, it disappears by gradually getting smaller. Remnants of three foundations can be found. Perhaps this is a memory of one of them.

Legend has it that long ago, a farmer was plowing his field when the horse got spooked and began to run toward the water. Unable to control the horse, the man became tangled in the reins and dragged into the lagoon, where they both met with a watery death. Witnesses claim to have seen a ghostly horse emerge from the water pulling a plow and a man.

The most controversial and infamous sighting, was a photo taken by Judy Huff-Felz on August 10, 1991. It was taken on B&W 35mm film with an Olympus automatic camera. After the film was developed, she discovered that one particular frame contained the image of an almost transparent woman sitting on the base of a gravestone. She had long dark hair and was staring off into the distance. Examination of the negative proved the photo is authentic and has not been altered. Today, this basket-weave base is known as the Madonna Stone.

Strange lights, sounds, disembodied voices, apparitions, and footsteps following you are events that regularly occur at the cemetery. Some of the phenomena may be considered residual; however, I can assure you that the cemetery is very much alive and eager to communicate with you.

As you walk past the cemetery gates, pause, and look over your shoulder for one last glimpse, you realize one thing: It is not goodbye. Of that you will be certain because you will surely be meeting again.♦



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‘NO DOUBT ABOUT IT’

HOT CHOCOLATE AND THEIR UFO SONG

By Philip Mantle, Flying Disk Press

The pop song “No Doubt About It” by Hot Chocolate was a big hit in 1980, reaching number two in the U.K. singles chart and going on to be a success in many other countries as well. The band, led by singer Errol Brown, had a string of hits, but none of them were like this one.

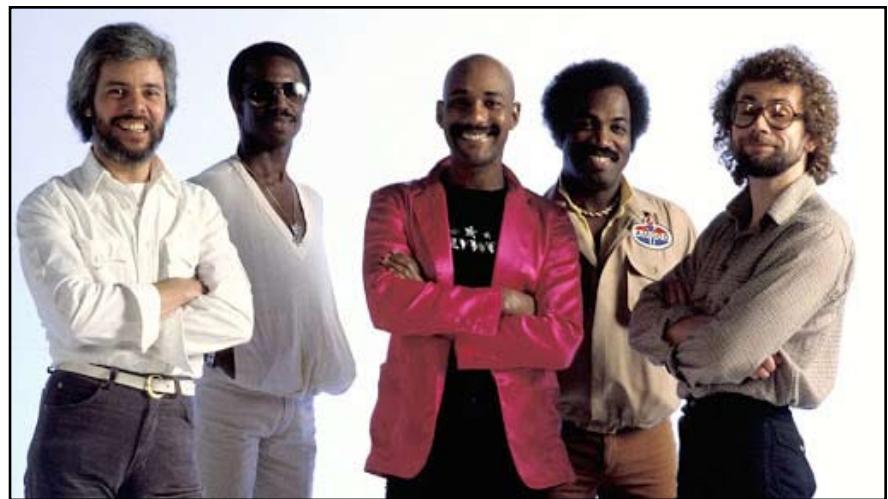
This song told the story of a UFO sighting, which was not what we were used to hearing in 1980s, or at any other time for that matter. It was also completely different to anything that Hot Chocolate had ever recorded. It was released on the RAK record label and spent 11 weeks in the charts. So, what’s the story behind it? Was Errol Brown singing about a real event? Or was this a song simply from its writers Mike Burns and Steve Glen?

For those unfamiliar with this song you can find the video on [YouTube](#).

I had always been curious about this song and remember it well from my days as a young man. I was therefore extremely pleased to obtain the contact details of one of the co-writers of the song, Steve Glen, and managed to conduct a brief interview with him on the telephone in late January 2019.

A North London resident, Steve started out in music business as a singer-songwriter before moving on as a songwriter/record producer working with artists such as Cliff Richard, Gloria Gaynor, Roger Daltrey, Bucks Fizz, Suzi Quatro, and of course Hot Chocolate. He had been taken under the wing of legendary music producer Micky Most, who had advised Steve that perhaps his future lay in writing and producing rather than that of a singer. Steve took that advice and signed to RAK as an in-house writer/producer. He has had a long and successful career as a result, one that still continues to this day.

While speaking with Steve, it wasn’t long before I realized that the song “No Doubt About It” was not a figment of his imagination but was in fact based on a UFO close encounter, a close encounter that he had been witness to along with his writing partner Mike Burns and a pop group by the name of The Toys — and not Hot Chocolate. This is what Steve had to tell me about his close encounter.



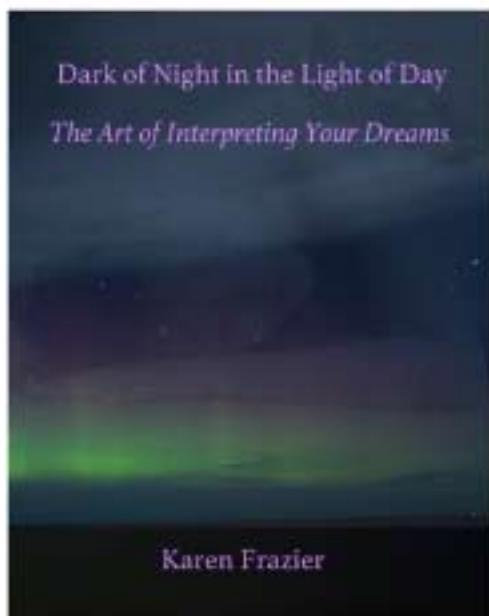
Songwriter/producer Steve Glen reveals the real-life UFO encounter behind the hit song “No Doubt About It” by Hot Chocolate.

“It’s a true story. I was driving on the Hendon Way with my writing partner Mike Burns and he pointed up in sky and said, ‘What’s that up there?’ I nearly drove off the road. We were actually on our way to the RAK recording studio in St John’s Wood at the time. I was producing a band called The Toys at the time, and the band was following behind us in a van. Mike had looked behind us to check that the van carrying the band was following us and noticed that they were pointing towards the sky. Mike looked up and could not believe his eyes. He now

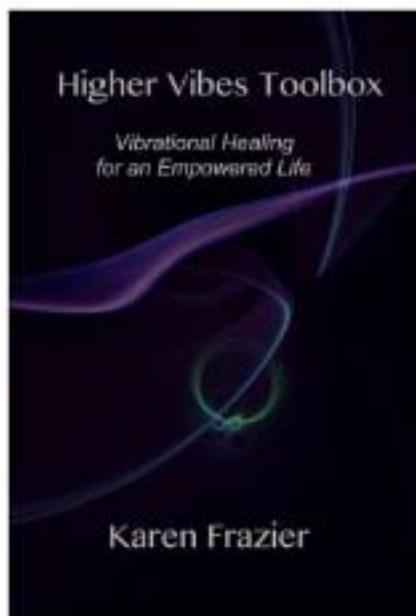
New from *Paranormal Underground* columnist

Karen Frazier

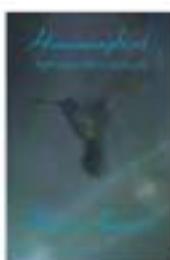
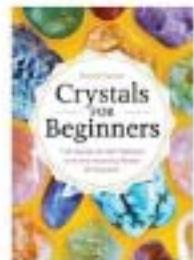
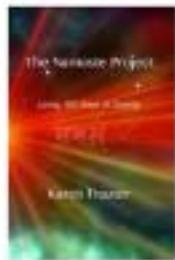
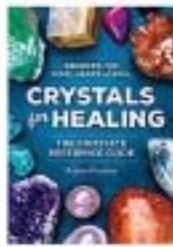
Unlock the power of your dreams



Improve your life with vibrational healing



Also by Karen



AuthorKarenFrazier.com



If someone tells you there's no other form of life

And you believe in that too

I'm gonna tell you 'bout the other night

I swear that it's true"

—Lyrics from “No Doubt About It” (sung by Hot Chocolate)

drew my attention to what the others had been looking at. As I turned off the A40 onto The Finchley Road at Hampstead, I veered off onto West Heath Road and stopped just below the Leg of Mutton Pond. All I can say is that the UFO, well it was right above us. It was massive — about four or five houses wide. And when we got out to have a look, it created an orange cloud.”

The date and time of this incident was about 5 p.m. on Sunday, January 13, 1980.

Steve went on to explain that he and Mike got out of the car to take a look at this thing, which was literally right above them, and the members of The Toys got out of their van to view this unusual sight as well. While standing there almost transfixed, viewing this large gray-brown object, it suddenly created an orange cloud, which hid the large UFO.

The lyrics in the song “No Doubt About It” describes a cloud of white and green and not orange. This is because the songwriters could not find a rhyme for the word orange, so they changed orange to white and green! After a short while of calm and staring at the orange cloud,

suddenly several small objects shot out and started heading toward the assembled on-lookers and almost dive-bombed them. These small objects were described as having only wings with no fuselage, and they too were also a gray-brown color. Steve didn't hesitate to duck out of sight in a nearby hedge, and he's pretty certain that The Toys band jumped back into their vehicle.

The UFO remained above the two vehicles, and thinking fast, Steve noticed that there was a telephone box right next to where they had stopped. He jumped up and headed for this, where he called the Army first. A spokesman told him that there is no such thing as UFOs, so he then called the police. To his surprise, the police did turn up, and they too observed this UFO.

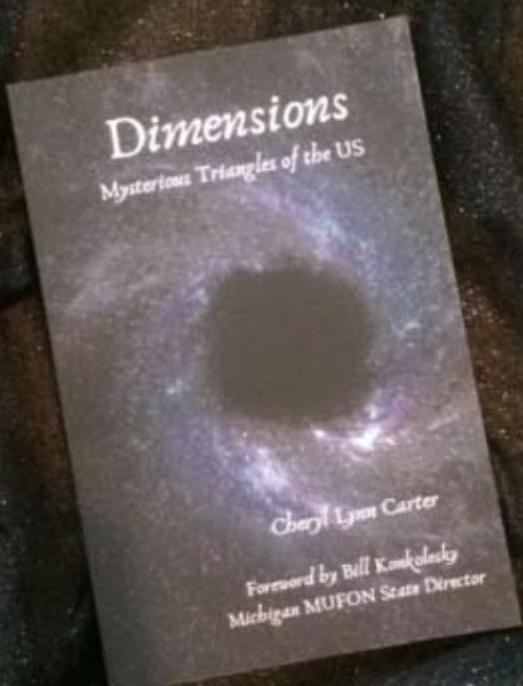
The whole sighting lasted for about 40 minutes, after which the UFO shot off into the sky at a terrific speed and was completely silent. Two police officers even came to visit them the next day at the recording studio to take down some more details. Steve was very surprised that other motor vehicles on the road at the time didn't stop, as they were on a busy road (A41 by Henly's Corner).

After this encounter Steve went to Mike's house, where he discussed what had just happened with his co-writer before he wrote the song. They asked each other, “Did we just see a UFO?”

Both agreed that there was NO DOUBT ABOUT IT! He said it was one of the fastest songs he'd ever written, and it went on to be one of Hot Chocolate's biggest sellers. Some years later, Steve also wrote the song “Is There Anybody Out There” for Roger Daltrey (lead singer with The Who), which was a sort of frustrated plea to whatever or whoever is out there in the galaxy. Steve said that this song also pretty much wrote itself.

I asked Steve why he hadn't talked about this event much, and he told me that he had talked about it at the time and was interviewed by the press and TV, but he was annoyed with people hinting that because they were in the music business they must have been on drugs. He said that in the end, he just told Hot Chocolate's lead singer Errol Brown to say that he'd seen it himself just to help promote the song. It obviously worked, as it sold in its tens of thousands around the world.

Steve still works in the music business and is currently working on a number of new projects. I thanked him for his time and asked him if he was now a believer in UFOs, and it won't surprise you to know that he said, “No doubt about it.” ♦



DIMENSIONS: MYSTERIOUS TRIANGLES OF THE US

by Cheryl Lynn Carter

The Earth's surface is endowed with mysterious triangular patterns that whisper of mystical energy and vibrations. The ancients considered them doorways that would enable one to traverse time and move through dimensions.

Available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)
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**HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO SLEEP WHERE THINGS GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT?
HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO DINE WITH GHOSTS AND GHOULS?
HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO WALK IN THE SHADOWS OF VAMPIRES, GHOSTS
AND CRYPTIDS?
DOES LEARNING ABOUT MACABRE, THE STRANGE, OR THE WICKEDLY EVIL
FEED YOUR SOUL?**

Then I invite you to join me at "Where the Dark Corners Are", a podcast geared toward people who believe in the paranormal, who love traveling, who seek the ghastly stories, and learn about the morbid, the chilling and the seriously spooky.

Using the haunted world as our road map, each week we will visit a ghastly hot spot, anywhere from the port of New Orleans to the abandon castles of Romania.

And, as a gruesome bonus, on occasion, I will be joined by Da Panda, Panda Mike, as we take a road trip to a specific location, where we stop and discuss said place of absolute darkness and the horrifying madness that transpired there.



So join us on



TUSK DEVIL OF URUGUAY

By Paul Dale Roberts, Halo Paranormal Investigations

I recently communicated with Rodrigo from Colonia del Sacramento, a city in southwestern Uruguay.

Rodrigo has an interesting story to tell. (Rodrigo's parents do not like their son dabbling with ghost hunts, so he does not want his last name published.)

Rodrigo, who is part Portuguese, says that when the Portuguese settlers first arrived, there was much resistance by the indigenous people. The Charrua, Chana, and Guaraní tribes fiercely resisted the Portuguese settlers — to no avail. The Portuguese ended the resistance and began a genocide of the Charrua tribe to set an example amongst other tribal colonies.

Rodrigo says that there is a small group of people that know about the legend of the Tusk Devil of Uruguay. Here is the story ... A resident named Julieta Fernandes was camping at Ipora Lake in Tacuarembó, when she and her friends around a campfire summoned the Tusk Devil of Uruguay. Julieta wanted revenge against her fiancée, who cheated on her with her best friend.

Julieta had her friends say a little chant, cursing her fiancée. Out of nowhere, the Tusk Devil of Uruguay appeared. Julieta's description of the Tusk Devil follows: It moves like a big ape with knuckles touching the ground, red fur, sharp yellow teeth, yellow tusks coming out of the side of its head, dark sunken black holes for eyes, pig snout, top of its head has hair that goes straight up (like a Mohawk).

Julieta feels they summoned the Tusk Devil. Julieta and her friends ran as fast as they could out of the woods and to their car. The girls could hear the growls of the Tusk Devil. Julieta says when she went back home, did her own research and learned that the Tusk Devil was a creature that may have come to this reality from another reality. It may have been summoned by the Charrua tribe for protection against the Portuguese.

At Weyerhaeuser Forest, Rodrigo and two of his friends summoned the Tusk Devil by chanting its name.



The Tusk Devil of Uruguay is described as moving like a big ape with knuckles touching the ground, red fur, sharp yellow teeth, yellow tusks coming out of the side of its head, dark sunken black holes for eyes, a pig snout, and hair that goes straight up.

Rodrigo says that peeking from behind a tree, they saw a reddish creature that they believe was the Tusk Devil. As they watched, the fur of this creature became green in color and before they knew it the creature blended in with the forest. The colors on the creature changed like a Chameleon. They believe the creature became camouflaged with its surroundings and they could no longer see it.

Using a FLIR camera, they detected a heat signature

where the creature was last seen. Then, Rodrigo and his two friends heard a blood-curdling growl, and they all fled back to their vehicle.

Rodrigo reflects back to this day and believes the Tusk Devil is not an evil creature. He thinks it may be a protective creature that meant them no harm. When the sighting of the creature took place, one of Rodrigo's friends claimed that there was a diamond-shaped UFO off in the distance. Rodrigo and his other friend did not see the UFO. Rodrigo seems to think if there was a UFO nearby, perhaps there is a connection to the UFO and the creature.

Note: I discovered this on [MUFON's website](#): By Roger Marsh: "A Uruguay witness near Bekode reported discovering an unknown object in photos taken after climbing a 1.5 km hill, according to testimony in Case 83772 from the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) witness reporting database. The witness and his cousin climbed to the top of the hill at 10:54 a.m. on May 6, 2017.

The witness statement follows:

"We took many single photos in my Samsung Galaxy S3, which has an 8 MP camera. I needed to take

a photo of us both, and I didn't have a tripod, so I kept my phone on a nearby rock and set a timer and took this photo. The object seems to stop and hover, because if it was moving, we would have got a shaken image, which we didn't. When we were climbing, we stopped for eating when my cousin's phone started taking photos on its own. I think this is because of some kind of EMP emission (electromagnetic pulse), which messes with our phone. His phone was an iPhone 4S. We only saw the object after taking the photo approximately at 7 p.m. IST ON May 6, 2017.

I was looking through the photos and found this thing. I thought it was an alien, because I believed in aliens and I was doing a lot of research about UFOs and aliens. I was happy and amazed, and I can't believe I actually came over a UFO myself after doing so much research about them."

You can see the picture by [clicking here](#).

So, perhaps Rodrigo may be correct. Bigfoot is at times associated with UFOs. There have been cases in Mount Shasta where witnesses see a UFO and later have an encounter with a Bigfoot. So, if there was a UFO nearby, could the Tusk Devil be a creature from this UFO? ◆

Flying Disk Press

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**NEW AND THOUGHT PROVOKING BOOKS
FROM AROUND THE WORLD**

Contact Philip Mantle: philip.mantle@gmail.com

The Haunted Gypsy Wagon

A True Christmas Ghost Story

By T Stokes, Holistic Palmist

Pete's old horse-drawn Gypsy wagon was a relic of a bygone era, and a large crowd gathered wherever it went. Pete lived in it most of the year while traveling to various events and festivals, but while females felt comfortable in the wagon, most males were uneasy and quickly wanted to get out.

Pete always wondered why.

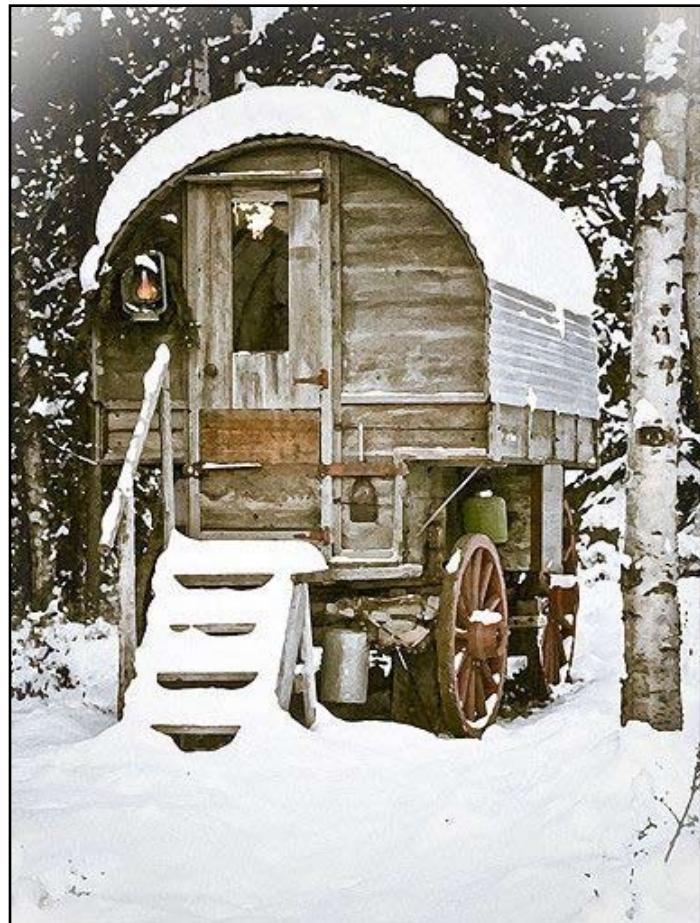
* * * * *

Originally, whole families, often with several children, lived in these canvas-covered wagons, called "ragtups." They lived their lives on the side of the road as best they could, often traveling from farm to farm, working in the fields and doing a variety of odd jobs.

The wagon, the forerunner of today's modern caravans, carried all their worldly goods, feed for the horse, and often a few chickens too. Nowadays, most people just use these wagons as curios and holiday homes. The popular author Roald Dahl wrote all his children's books in an old Gypsy wagon in his garden. They are certainly attractive, with bright-colored fittings and nice carvings, which were originally intended to fend off any evil spirits.

Pete, a man who originally worked in maxillofacial surgery, could turn his hand to most crafts. He mended broken faces after severe violence or road crashes. But as his skills grew, so did the pressure of work coming in from far and wide. Soon, Pete found he was not coping well with so much work and was waking up at night in a sweat, dreaming of skidding and crashed cars and seeing lines of broken faces.

So, he gave up the high-pressure lifestyle for one where just he and the wagon could feel the freedom of travel, be under the night sky and the stars, and live from a few fish caught in rivers and fruit and berries picked from wayside hedgerows.



A vardo (also known as a Romani living wagon) is a traditional horse-drawn wagon that served as homes for some British Romanichal Travelers. These wagons were used primarily over a period of 70 years, starting from the mid-1800s and lasting through the second decade of the twentieth century.

While you might think one of these wagons is too small to be haunted, one Christmas Eve investigation of a haunted Gypsy wagon revealed surprising results.

Pete's message is that of simple life: You don't need big cars, big mortgages, or foreign holidays. People flock to him to hear his message of simple living.

Pete asked me several times to examine the wagon to determine why men felt unwelcome. And although past memories and past emotions were not difficult to grasp, the wagon had been altered and repaired over so many years that it gave confusing vibrations. But the occasion came when Pete could bear it no longer and asked me again for help. Some men were even afraid to be inside the wagon.

So, I tramped through the snow to where he was parked in the Wiltshire countryside and saw his makeshift shower, with a branch bent down and tied to the ground and a pail of water suspended high above, and a pile of dead wood ready for his wagon's small stove.

In chatting with Pete over a cup of herbal tea picked that morning, Pete said he was really wanted to know why men felt such weird vibes in the wagon. He had been invited out for the evening and asked if I would stay inside the wagon and see what I could feel.

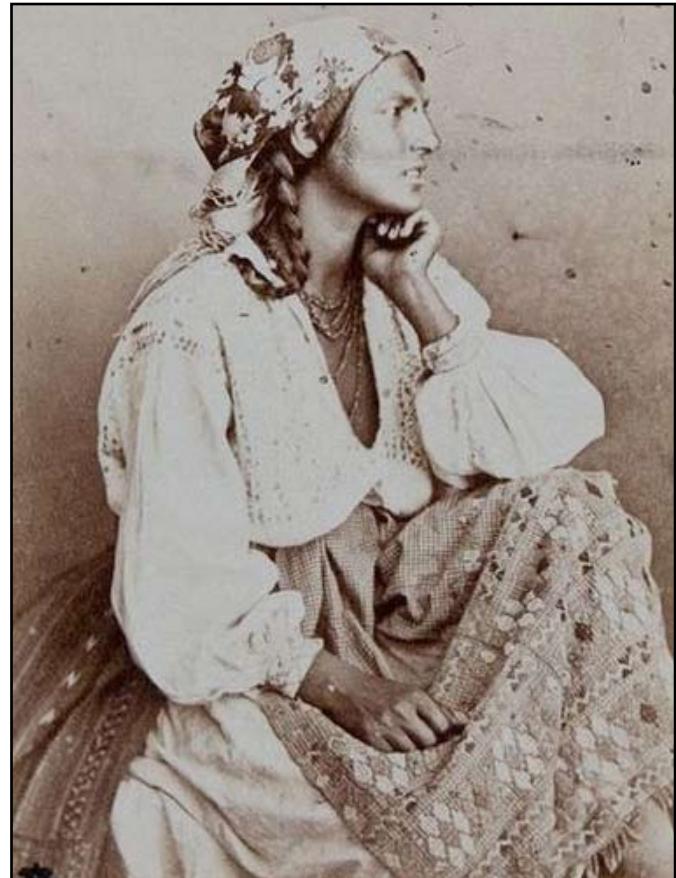
Left on my own that Christmas Eve, I sat there with no inspiration and felt a bit defeated. So I put another small log into the stove and lay in the bunk to let my thoughts ramble. Suddenly, I realized how comfortable it all was. Pulling a sheepskin over me, I felt very much at peace.

I had been dozing for some time, but I awoke with a start as a short, plump, weather-beaten, old woman stood over me and asked what I was doing in her wagon. A little shocked, I blurted out that I was here as Pete's guest. She said this was her home and was very fussy about who came inside. She was not keen on men at all.

I felt very on edge by her anger and tried to pacify her with the few words of Romany that I knew. Her face then changed, and she stood back. Only then did I realize how absurd it was that I was threatened by the ghost of a long-dead Gypsy brandishing a saucepan.

She went on to tell me how tough life was back in those days, including the worry of finding food for the children and how long and hard the winters were. She talked about how people often did not make it through the winter and roadside burials were commonplace. She only had three of her children survive.

I was entranced that this dead lady had appeared to me and was telling me her life story. Then I lapsed back into a deep sleep and was only disturbed by Pete's return. As he banged the snow from his boots, I told him the story of the old Gypsy lady named Rose. She had escaped a brutal and cruel husband and bought the Gypsy wagon. She went hop picking and vegetable gathering. Because she had been treated so badly by men, she was so suspicious of them and did not like them in her old home



I realized how absurd it was that I was threatened by the ghost of a long-dead Gypsy brandishing a saucepan.

Pete listened and corrected me. He said her name was Rosanna and she did own the wagon and traveled in Kent many years back working on farms.

In the late 1900s and early part of this century, people were often buried outside cemeteries and indeed by the roadside. These were called deviant burials without any religious ceremony. It was said these souls could become renegade souls. My experience says that this is possible but not a general rule at all. Nevertheless, Gypsies (or as they now prefer to be called "traveling people") are very superstitious and many do believe these old burials are the cause of vampires and wandering souls. So, I explained to Pete that the spirit of this old Gypsy lady desperately wanted a prayer said for her spirit, and she also wanted the wagon blessed. Pete just said, "Well just do it."

We built a small fire outside, consecrated some sticks as wands, and smudged the four corners of the wagon. We told Rosanna not to worry and to go to the light, and as we cleansed the wagon's entrance with some blessed salt water, we saw the wagon seeming to glow in the cold Wiltshire Christmas sunshine. We could swear we saw in the shadows of the trees nearby the shape of an old Gypsy woman with three children smile and then swiftly walk away.♦

THE HAUNTING IN BUBBA'S BEDROOM

BY BOB FOUNTAIN, SPECTRAL TECH

Spectral Tech recently conducted an investigation in West Tennessee that centered around a three-year-old little boy, nicknamed Bubba, who either had a very overactive imagination or something unseen was taking an interest in him.

Over the years, most of the cases I have investigated focused on a single site, building, or residence. Although this case is about a single residence, there appears to be a larger picture taking shape.

This investigation started by getting a request from an acquaintance, Amanda, who knew I investigated claims of the paranormal. Amanda gave me some of the claims of activity at her friend's house and the contact information I requested so I could do a pre-investigation interview.

My initial thoughts were that we were dealing with a child with an active imagination and his imaginary friend. Those thoughts changed.

During the hour-long interview with his grandmother, who is raising Bubba and his sister, there were other indicators that he was not all imagination.

Feelings of being watched, dogs and cats acting strange, and Bubba carrying on one-sided conversations alone in his bedroom and even during his sleep. Bubba's 4-year-old old sister was once afraid to go into her bedroom because an unseen little girl was in her room playing with her toys.

Finally, Bubba came to his grandmother and said something he called "the man" had scared him and said it was going to eat him. This scared his grandmother for good reason. No imaginary friend threatens to eat you, and it also prompted our team to investigate immediately.

The Investigation

Tara Finley, Brandon Bobbitt, and I met Cheryl (the grandmother) at her house on December 2, 2020, and began our initial investigation. The area was immediately familiar to us. We had investigated another residence



A 3-year-old boy at this home needed help, and fast. He was reportedly being terrorized by a scary male spirit.

less than a quarter-mile from Cheryl's house a year earlier.

All three of us felt subtle changes in the energy present when entering the house, and even stronger changes when entering the bedroom areas where the children slept. After an EMF sweep was performed throughout the house, it was decided that the focus for this investigation would be primarily in the children's bedrooms where most of the activity was reported.

We set up the BooBuddy paranormal tool in one of the children's bedrooms. Several times during the night, it indicated that it was being touched by unseen hands.

Both Tara and Brandon initiated EVP sessions in the children's bedrooms and other areas of the house. Although there was virtually no traditional EVPs picked up on the digital recorders during the evidence review, the activity verbally noted on the recorder being used by Tara indicated the entities were willing to communicate through the K-II EMF Meters. Tara and Brendon always verbally state the responses they get from the meters during EVP

sessions so there is a complete picture of what is going on during evidence review.

During these EVP sessions, it appeared that we were communicating with two young children (a boy and a girl). Through interaction with the K-II EMF Meters, they indicated that there was the spirit of a bad man there that they were afraid of. It should be noted that if the entities were indeed the spirits of children, it would explain why the BooBuddy was frequently being touched (it's a Teddy bear with various monitors) and why there was a reluctance to communicate through the digital recorders. Often, young children tend to be shy and are only willing to communicate nonverbally.

The SLS camera picked up briefly what appeared to be a figure sitting in a rocking chair in the living room, but it left after we acknowledged its presence and never returned.

Evidence Review

What we found based on the initial claims, review of the digital recorders, and personal experiences includes:

- The activity does not appear to be residual energy and is very likely an active haunting.
- There appear to be three entities present in the house: a young girl, a young boy, and an adult male, which the young entities say is scary.
- The male entity has taken an active interest in Bubba and has reportedly broken his toys and said scary things to him, which is of some concern. Although benign right now, this interest could also evolve into an attachment.
- The male entity did not communicate with us and appeared to be hiding from us during investigating Bubba's bedroom.
- The female child spirit is the most talkative and was quick to point out that different entities are present. She also says she tries to protect Bubba from the scary man.

Conclusion

Although the activity is fairly current, there is no way to pinpoint how long these entities have been present. Young children are more aware of the spirit realm around them and can sense and sometimes see entities that adults simply cannot. Besides having to deal with interactions with entities no one else can see, children often have to deal with adults who do not believe them or know what to do.

The general area has been reported to have paranormal activity. When we investigated activity within a quarter-mile from this house, we were told that Native Americans and Civil War soldiers were buried in the area. The Fort Pillow Massacre during the Civil War is



During the investigation, unseen hands set off BooBuddy, which is a Teddy bear with sensors embedded inside.

within 9 miles of this location.

We found out that a 19-year-old boy died in an ATV accident very close to Cheryl's house in 2016 and could be the man that is considered scary. If this man appears in spirit covered in blood from his injuries, I would think it would certainly be scary to children.

We also found that another man died very close to this house when his car crashed into a tree at high speed. Any of these conditions could cause restless spirits in this area to interact with living beings.

So, is this a case of an individual haunting or just a piece of a much larger area filled with negative and restless spirits? Are Civil War soldiers upset about dying so young and being buried with no markers, or are Native Americans angry that their land has been defiled?

We recently learned that the remaining homeowners in the cul-de-sac we investigated last year (close to Cheryl's home) are all trying to leave because of paranormal activity. Are there angry entities actively affecting the living in this area, and are they responsible for so many vehicle deaths in this small area?

We gave Cheryl several options as to how she could proceed next, and she opted to request help from her church to remove the entities from her house. We agreed with her decision and told her that we would always come back to help in any way we could if needed.

Time will tell if this investigation is over, but our hope is that Bubba and his family will find resolution as soon as possible. ♦

GET YOUR HAPPY ON!

A Simple Technique to Return You to Your Happy Place

By Karen Frazier, AuthorKarenFrazier.com

Do you have a happy place? Maybe it's somewhere you visualize going that makes you happy. Maybe it's a feeling you distinctly recall. Maybe it's the sound of a certain song or the way you feel after meditation.

Think about when you feel most peaceful, balanced, and joyful. Or just when you feel at your most positive. What if you could capture that anytime you wish?

Great news: You can! I mentioned this in last month's issue, and I'd like to expand on it a bit now. There's a simple technique in neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) called anchoring, and you can use it to recapture a positive feeling whenever you'd like. But to do that, first you have to get the positive feeling in the first place.

Many people can think themselves there. Think of someone you love dearly; a friend, a family member, a partner, a child, or even a pet. Think about them and start to feel them deeply. Allow the glow of that good feeling to spread throughout you.

Alternatively, think of your happy place, a beautiful memory, or your happy song. Use whatever you can to get yourself to that place. For me, any of the previous techniques work, or I can also do this after I've meditated or engaged in any physical activity that gets my endorphins flowing.

Once you have that positive feeling, come up with a unique gesture while you still inhabit the sensation. Make it a unique (to you) gesture; not one you perform daily. It could be tugging on your right ear with your thumb and forefinger or making an "OK" sign with your left hand, for instance. Make it a specific gesture. And, while you are still in the feeling, make the gesture several times.

As you repeat the gesture, do it exactly the same way each time. Do this until the intensity of the positive feeling begins to subside, and then stop. Alternatively, make the gesture and continue to hold it in position until the intensity of the feelings begin to lessen.

Now, anytime you wish to return to that place of posi-

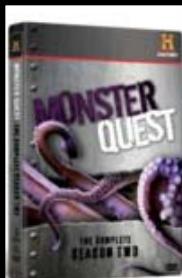


tive feeling, repeat the gesture exactly as you did it. That's it. It's effective and easy to do.

For energy healing practitioners, this is a great technique to teach your healing partners. At the end of their session when they're in that relaxed and positive state, teach them the technique and tell them they can return to that feeling anytime they wish by repeating the gesture. Allow them to choose a gesture that is specific and meaningful to them.

One word of caution to practitioners: Sometimes a session stirs up old, stuck, negative energy, and your healing partner may be processing old negative emotions at the end of and after a session. When I observe this happening, I try to continue with additional energy until it passes or initiate a visualization to help them feel safe and peaceful. But sometimes it may take a few days for all of the emotions to process.

If you observe this is the case at the close of a session, don't teach anchoring because that is not a feeling your healing partner wants to return to. Instead, wait until a later session when your healing partner is in a positive and relaxed state.♦



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5 Intentions to Set for 2021: A Year of Progress, Growth & Freedom

By Dr. Athena Perrakis, Sage Goddess



2021 is just days away, which means it's New Year's resolution time. Let's quickly step back before we go forward. 2020 tested our patience, endurance, and faith.

In numerology, 2020 was a number 4 year — 4 years are about building a new foundation, and that's what we needed to do. There's nothing easy about 4 — it's hard work all the way around. One reason 2020 was so difficult is that we experienced more of our thoughts manifesting in the material world.

4 years show us our ideas in form. We may not like everything we've created, but the great thing about tangible results is that you can see and then change them. Which leads us to 2021, a number 5 year. 5 years bring the energy of change and freedom from old habits and restrictions. 5 is also a number of prosperity and attraction. 2021 is a call to make more room for what we do want.

For many of us, the gift of 2020 was a new relation-

ship with time and space. It helped us get out of autopilot mode and take a new look at what we really need and what truly matters. That's a foundation worth the effort. Now we get to figure out what to start building on that foundation; what to make for ourselves and our communities.

In this blog, I'm sharing 5 intentions to set for 2021. They're just suggestions, but maybe they'll help you come up with your own. Knowing and focusing on what we want is the ticket to making it happen.

1) Do Something Good for Community

One of the best intentions you can set this year is to do something good for your community. And, don't do it to get something; do it because it's a good thing to do.

It's hard to be a positive influence, especially when everyone's on edge. It's easy to stop doing thoughtful or kind things when they're not reciprocated. And it's equally easy to respond to negativity with more negativity.



2021 begins with a Jupiter-Uranus square on January 17, challenging us to work together in new ways. This transit puts stress on old social customs that don't hold up anymore. So yes, things can break, but it's better to find out they can't hold their weight.

Remember this is a 5 year that demands more freedom of thought and action. Just because we used to do something a certain way doesn't mean it's the best way now. This rocking of the boat will rattle cages because Uranus wants to break them; wants us to let ourselves out.

During this time of change and uncertainty, step in and do what you can to build community. This doesn't have to look any certain way, but whatever it is, do it freely, generously, and authentically. And remember, anything good you do for someone else is doubly good for you and benefits us all.

2) Start a New Positive Habit and Stick to it for 28 Days

As a 5 year, 2021 is an open invitation to explore, grow, and do things differently. We need to do this collectively, but the best place to start is individually.

To do things differently, it helps to look at your habits. When you keep doing the same things, you get the same results. Habits are ruled by the Moon, which also rules memory and our reactions and emotions based on

the past. You don't have to keep following that old script, but it takes consciousness to change.

We all do things that just perpetuate bad habits, and we keep doing them, mostly because what we know makes us feel comfortable. For this intention, don't worry about the old ones. Just pick one new thing that you can do each day for at least 28 days or one moon cycle. Commit to one small new thing, and your life will shift.

Commit to doing one small new thing each day for 28 days, and your life will shift.

The best time to initiate new intentions is during the new moon phase, but you can do it anytime you want. If you want to sync with the Moon, the first new moon this year is on January 12, Pacific Time. It's in the sign Capricorn, energetically supporting this intention because Capricorn is all about taking charge of your life, making things happen, and making them last.

3) Reprogram Your Thoughts

Mercury turns retrograde about three times a year. 2021 is no exception, but this year all three of its retrograde periods are fully in air signs — one in Aquarius, one in Gemini, and one in Libra. All three air signs are intellectual and social, naturally aligned with Mercury, the planet of communication and perception.

Mercury impacts almost everything in our day-to-day life, like thinking, conversations and interactions, learning,



transportation, technology, and all kinds of connections. Maybe more than anything, Mercury is linked with how we see and believe things to be.

Mercury Retrograde periods are times to reconsider and reevaluate all of this, especially our thoughts. Energy follows thought into form. What you think is creating your reality every moment. Mercury Retrograde periods lead us within so we can reboot our minds. It's a good time to clear clutter, tie up loose ends, and find some new creative inspiration.

In air signs this year, retrograde Mercury will really push us to look at what's in our heads — how it's either helping or hindering our well-being and progress. The cosmos is sending a message. We need to work with our minds differently. We need to communicate with each other differently. We need to connect the dots differently.

Best thing we can all do this year is mind training. We can all be the cause of something great if we reprogram our thoughts to focus on that great intention. As I mentioned before, focusing on what you do want channels energy in that direction. Same for all the things you say you don't want. Where do you want the power to go? It's your thinking that answers that question.

If you keep bringing your thoughts back to what you want, you'll get more of it. An easy place to start is to hold something like peace, patience, or abundance in your mind. Make that word like a prayer or mantra that you repeat silently as often as you can, especially during tough times. ♦

4) Set Limits to Support Your Freedom

If you want more time and resources to do something new or just more of what makes you happy, you have to set limits on competing interests. This might be the year to really say no to things that don't align with who you are and keep you trapped in "shoulds" and "have to's."

One of the big astrological events of 2021 is the Saturn-Uranus square. The two will form an exact square three times in February, June, and December. This is an ongoing struggle between freedom and control. Uranus wants to liberate, and Saturn is hard to move once rooted into place. The thing is, we need structure just as much as we need freedom. While it may seem like it, the two aren't at odds, we just need to find a new balance.

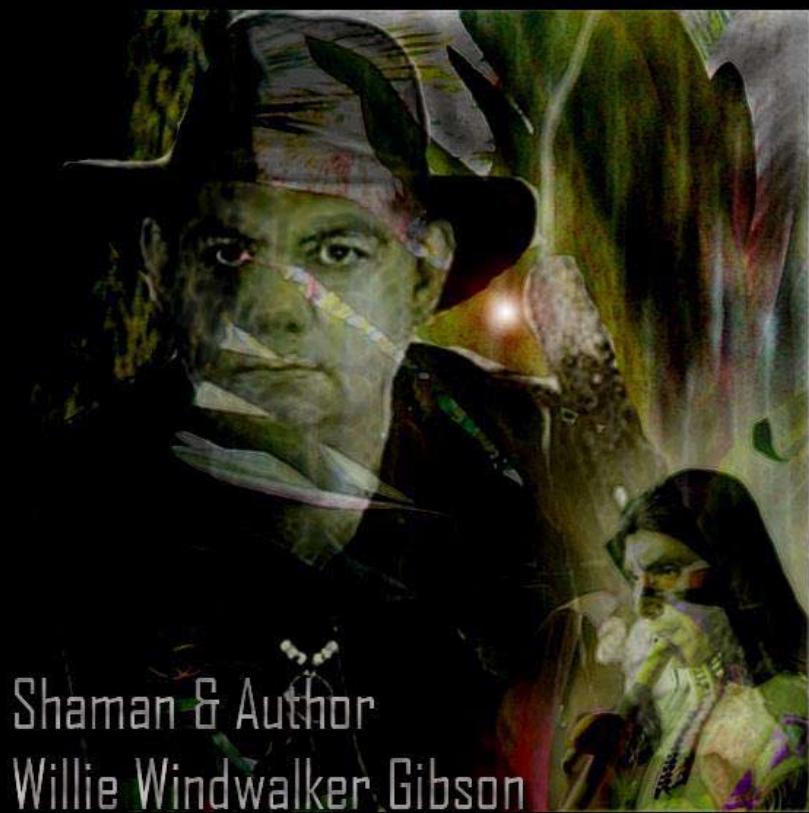
The Saturn-Uranus square will upset the status quo because we need to reinvent ourselves. Start reinventing yourself by choosing something you wish you were free to do or be. Then set limits on the things that stop you from doing it. Say yes to your heart, and make it happen.

5) Be an Ally With Others and Life

Our relationships with each other need to change. If we don't start playing on the same team, we won't get far. One great intention to set this year is to be an ally with others and life. This doesn't mean you have to be everyone's best friend (or even like them). To ally with someone means to unite for mutual benefit.

The Jupiter-Saturn Great Conjunction on December 21, 2020, was in Aquarius. It marks a new era of air energy that will continue for about 200 years. I've already mentioned the air element, but it's such a big theme we're back to it again. Planets in air signs want to share information, work together, be heard, and come up with better ideas. Great Conjunctions shake things up socially, politically, and personally.

With Jupiter and Saturn in Aquarius this year, collective change is upon us, and we need to be creative and objective about it. We spend so much time going against people and things. If we channel our energy into what we stand for and come together, we'll make real progress. It starts with leaving the "us and them" behind and supporting the We. This is what Aquarius is really about — collective change for the good of all. Life is for you. Will you be for it? ♦



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Memories of CHRISTMAS PAST

By Willie Windwalker Gibson

Growing up in Louisville, Kentucky, back in the '60s was a magical time. There were five of us kids, and Christmas was our yearly treat.

At school, we looked forward to the giant Christmas party in the auditorium. Santa would come and give out giant candy canes, and he would talk to every one of us about our Christmas wishes. That was the start of Christmas for the kids of the neighborhood.

When we got out of school for Christmas break, we would hurry home and tell Mom and Dad about seeing Santa, including what we told him we wanted for Christmas. We usually got out of school a few days before Christmas, so this gave Mom and Dad time to figure out how Santa was going to get those gifts to them.

Usually, Dad would tell my aunts what Santa was told, and they would help out — unbeknownst to us kids. My two aunts didn't have kids, and they were a big part of our Christmas. My father had a hard time providing for us five kids, and my aunts were more than happy to help. We all were like their own kids.

The final days leading up to Christmas Eve were very special. We never had a Christmas tree because dad was afraid of fire, but we were allowed to decorate. We had knickknacks we put around the house, and we decorated the windows. Instead of a tree, we had a Christmas table we would decorate for the incoming toys. We knew Santa would load the table with toys and candy and fruit.

On Christmas Eve, we would go to bed usually at 9 p.m. We knew that Santa would deliver our toys overnight. But Christmas was also special to me because I would get visits from spirits. For instance, many a Christmas I would be awakened by my grandfather. Sometimes we would go on journeys — kind of like when the spirits took Scrooge to Christmas past and future. It was fun, but eventually I would be taken back and put in my bed.

I never told my dad. I figured that was a special time with his dad for me. I was his namesake.

Many people don't realize that Christmas is a special



time for spirits to roam about visiting people. You might think that Halloween is more spiritually active, but Christmas actually has the most spiritual visitation — I think because it's a holy time of year.

Finally, Christmas morning would come, and we all would jump out of bed and run to the kitchen. There was the kitchen table loaded with toys and goodies, just like it was every year.

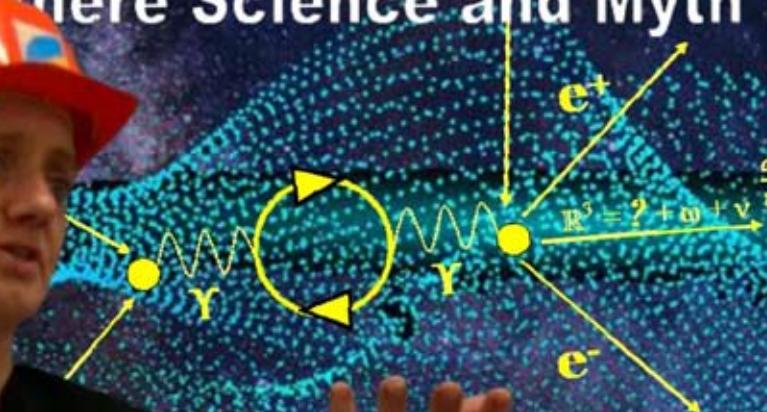
Christmas dinner was also a very special time for us. We would get Mom's famous banana pudding, which we only got at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Dad always said Christmas dinner was his favorite because the entire family would be together.

As the years passed and mom and dad died, we all scattered. We had our own families and had our separate dinners. It seemed the glue that kept us together ended with our mom and dad.

We do have memories, though, and every year my mind goes back to those memories. I am sure you have memories too, which are always important to remember, especially around Christmas. ♦

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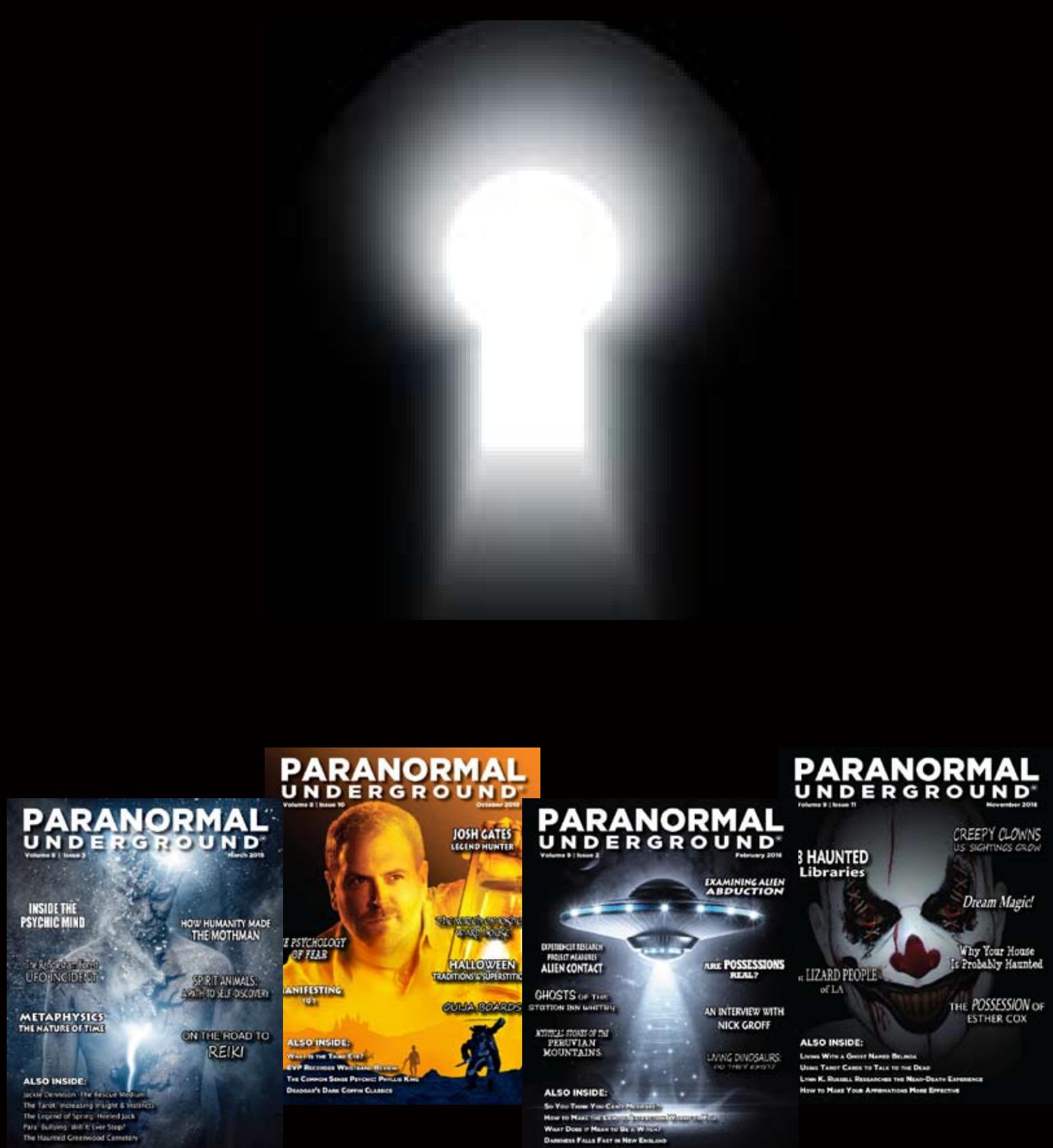
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